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PETALUMA AREA GENERAL PLAN 1962

County

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PETALUMA AREA GENERAL PLAN

Adopted by the Petaluma City Planning Commission,
October 30, 1961.

Adopted by the Council of the City of Petaluma, March 5,
1962.

Adopted by the Sonoma County Planning Commission,
July 19, 1962.

Adopted by the Board of Supervisors of Sonoma County,
September 11, 1962.

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an urban planning grant from the Housing and Home Finance
Agency, under the provisions of Section 701 of the Housing
Act of 1954, as amended.

THE GENERAL PLAN

The Petaluma Area General Plan covers a 94 square mile area including the City of Petaluma and adjoining land in the County from Meacham Hill to Hog Island and from the Sonoma Mountains to the County line. (It does not include the Cotati-Penngrove area north of U.S. 101 Freeway and Corona Road. This area is being planned by the County.)

The General Plan is the product of cooperative efforts of the City and County Planning Commissions, a 110-member citizens committee, the consultants, and the City and County Planning Departments. Preparation of the plan was financed partly by a grant from the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency.

Starting in September 1960, the consultants and members of the City and County planning staffs surveyed present conditions, reviewed existing plans and ordinances, and prepared analyses and forecasts. Meanwhile, the Citizens Committee was appointed to assist in determining the general policies that should guide development of the Petaluma area. The consultants submitted a Population Forecast report in January 1961 and a report on Planning Factors and Alternative Policies in February 1961. (Copies of these reports containing survey findings, analyses, and projections and

covering population, school enrollments, physical factors, agriculture, employment, industry, retail trade, offices and services, residential areas, schools, public buildings, circulation, and blight are available at the City Hall.) The Citizens Committee report was submitted in February, and after reviewing it and the consultants' reports, the City Planning Commission, assisted by members of the County Planning Commission and by the City Council, decided on the policies that were to be the bases of the plan.

Beginning in June 1961 and continuing for over a year, the General Plan was the subject of public hearings by the City Planning Commission, the City Council, the County Planning Commission, and the Board of Supervisors. After making revisions reflected in this report, the plan was adopted by the planning commissions and the legislative bodies.

The adopted plan does not have the force of law as do zoning and subdivision regulations. It is a general and flexible guide to Petaluma's future development. Construction projects and annexation proposals can be judged in light of the plan, and public agencies and private property owners can relate their projects to the plan or request modification of it.

The plan looks ahead 25 years during which the population of the Petaluma planning area is expected to increase from 21,400 (1960) to 77,000. It provides a comprehensive system of residential areas, industrial areas, commercial areas, schools, parks, and trafficways adequate for a population of 77,000. Because the plan looks ahead to 1985, it cannot be specific about the location of schools, parks, or roads that will not be needed in the early years. However, the plan's proposals are definite and are based on careful projections of present trends. If conditions change, the plan must be revised. An up-to-date plan will serve as the basis for coordinated public and private decisions on development matters that will promote the economic health of the Petaluma area and increase the desirability of Petaluma as a place to live.

MAJOR POLICIES

Major policies on eight matters shape the plan:

Compact development. The effects of permitting scattered subdivisions in outlying areas before close-in areas are mostly built-up would be serious. Ranchers and farmers would receive complaints about their operations from new urban dwellers in their midst. Land owners would be burdened with higher taxes and yet would have no prospect of selling their land at subdivision prices. The community at large would pay more for school buses, road improvements, and other public services. The plan was shaped by the policy that new development should adjoin presently developed areas to prevent the costly and undesirable consequences of scattered subdivision. The limits of urban growth, especially in the areas north and west of the city, were determined to some extent by whether lands can be sewered economically.

Balanced growth, east side and west side. Residential areas on the east side now are growing five times faster than the rest of the city. If recent trends continue, within 25 years 49,000 people will live on the east side, 18,400 on the west side. Guided by the policy that growth on the west side should be encouraged to achieve a balance, the General Plan shows the east side growing only twice as fast as the rest of the city. Continued growth of the west side will benefit the entire planning area. It will keep downtown centrally located in the urban area. It will allow full and efficient use of existing improvements and public facilities on the west side. It will prevent the east side from becoming an unduly large and monotonously uniform development, with excessive school costs caused by overbuilding schools in fast-growing neighborhoods. It will help to keep available for industry east side land served by the freeway, the railroads, and the river.

Dominance of downtown. The City and the County recognize the importance of downtown to the entire planning area. Cities are known by their downtowns, and those that do not have strong centers are apt to lose both civic pride and potential new enterprises. The dollar spent downtown has a multiplying effect not found in shopping centers because greater variety of merchandise can be supported, unplanned purchases are more likely, and office employees are an important source of retail sales. Trade can be drawn from a larger area than by several shopping centers or highway commercial strips with equal total floor area. Downtown Petaluma should remain the dominant shopping district in the planning area.

Industrial development. The economic self-sufficiency of Petaluma should be maintained and strengthened. The plan proposes industrial development that will increase manufacturing activity and raise to the state average the percentage

of local employment in manufacturing by 1985. The plan provides land for industry that will bring Petaluma more jobs, and so it is assumed there will be no increase in the percentage of local residents who commute to areas outside Petaluma to work. First consideration should be given to reserving lands for industry. Industrial sites must be reasonably flat, well drained, and served by transportation facilities. Tract housing competes favorably for this type of land and will usurp it if it is not set aside for industrial development. On the other hand, there is plenty of flat and rolling land in the planning area that is not served by freeway, rail, and water transportation and is suitable for residential development. General ("heavy") industry should be located southeast of the city. This type of industry can make best use of the rail and water transportation available there. Winds, which blow from the northwest 85 per cent of the time, can carry away from the city any airborne wastes or smells emitted by these plants. Limited ("light") industry need not be restricted to a southeast location.

Riverfront. The river is one of Petaluma's major assets. Its potential scarcely has been tapped. Future development should capitalize on it. In planning development of the riverfront, first priority should be given to industry, second priority to recreation, and third priority to residential development.

New parks. Petaluma will need a park system scaled to the requirements of a population of 77,000. Land must be acquired in the '60s, or there will be no centrally located sites left in the '70s and '80s when the need for parks will be felt keenly. The city should have a centrally located riverfront park and one or more large rural parks in the surrounding hills. A municipal golf course should be planned for the flat or gently rolling lands on the east side. Standards of the Guide for Planning Recreation Parks in California

should be followed in determining the size and locations of community and neighborhood recreation parks, but these standards may be reduced where parks serving the entire city also meet local needs. Community and neighborhood recreation parks should be located adjacent to schools, wherever practicable, for reasons of economy in land acquisition, maintenance, and supervision. Wherever possible, City-owned water department lands should be used for parks.

Airport. Eventually the present airport will become a hazard and a nuisance to developing residential areas. The land will become too valuable to keep in airport use when the surrounding area is developed. However, air transport is a public convenience and an attraction for potential new industries. In accord with the 1960 Federal Aviation Agency proposal to Congress, an airport should be planned in a new location so as to maintain air service in Petaluma and to eliminate conflicts with residential areas. No places of public assembly should be located in the approach zones.

Rapid transit. It is possible that the proposed Bay Area Rapid Transit system will be extended to Petaluma before the end of the planning period. The plan should designate a rapid transit route and a centrally located station with an adequate parking area.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The plan designates space for 18,500 additional dwellings to house 55,800 new people.

The plan speaks in terms of residential "densities" rather than minimum lot size requirements because densities tell

us how many people per acre there will be, and the number of people per acre tells us how many schools, parks, and shopping centers and how much street capacity should be provided in a given area. Two kinds of urban densities are shown on the plan: a "medium" density of five dwelling units per gross acre and a "low" density of two dwelling units per gross acre (including streets).

It is possible to build very different kinds of development at the same density. In the three blocks bounded by Sixth, Eighth, D, and F Streets, a medium density of five dwelling units per gross acre has been achieved by a harmonious mixture of various types of single-family and multi-family dwellings. On the east side, the building of uniform rows of new homes has resulted in the same density. If a developer chooses to subdivide into single-family lots a parcel slated for medium density development, he can expect to get five lots from every gross acre of land at an average lot size of 6,200 square feet. Single-family lots in the low density areas would average 15,600 square feet. However, a mixture of various-size lots, ranging from 10,000 square feet up to an acre or more, also could make up an area where the average density is two dwelling units per gross acre.

It also would be possible, and in some cases desirable, to mix dwelling types judiciously and still achieve the prescribed densities. For instance, there may be locations where it is appropriate to build garden apartments near single-family homes. However, appropriate locations for apartments or mixtures of dwelling-types depend on precise development patterns that cannot be shown on a general plan. The City's new zoning ordinance designates specific areas where higher densities are allowed, and it also includes a "planned unit development" provision that permits mixtures of dwelling-types and shopping facilities on suitable sites upon approval of plans by the City.

For purposes of discussion, the planning area is divided into five residential areas:

The east side, between the railroads and U.S. 101 Freeway. Parts of this area currently are being subdivided. A few older homes also are located here. The plan calls for conversion of some of the older residential areas (primarily southwest of Wilson Street and southeast of Jefferson Street) to industrial use. The remainder of the area is expected to fill in at an average density of five dwelling units per gross acre and an average of 3.3 persons per dwelling unit. A population of 5,100 is projected for this portion of the east side in 1985.

The east side, beyond U.S. 101 Freeway. This area is largely open, flat land, and mainly is unincorporated territory. Recently completed and proposed subdivisions extend beyond Ely Road. This property is expected to develop at medium density with 3.2 persons per dwelling unit. The limits of the sector are set by the planning area boundary on the northwest (Corona Road) and the proposed industrial district on the southeast. The area is expected to house a population of 35,000 in 1985.

The west side, within the proposed Webster Street-Sunny Slope Avenue ring road. This area contains nearly half of the existing homes in the planning area and two-thirds of those in the city. It is expected to continue to develop at its present density of 5.2 dwelling units per gross acre with an average of 2.5 persons per dwelling unit. The area is bounded by Magnolia Avenue, Laurel Street, Webster Street, Sunny Slope Avenue, Mountain View Avenue, Petaluma Boulevard, and the central business district. Vacant lots are expected to be built on, but expansion of downtown will remove some land from residential use. The area's population is expected to drop from 8,500 to 8,200.

West side urban areas beyond the ring road. Scattered subdivisions and farms now are located in this area. New development is expected to be primarily low density. Except for concentrations of medium density housing on flatter lands along I Street and Mountain View Avenue, the sector southeast of Western Avenue is expected to develop with hillside homes on large lots. The sector north of Western Avenue is expected to reach an average density of two dwelling units per gross acre through a mixture of large (acre and half-acre) parcels, small-lot subdivisions, and existing rural dwellings. The west boundary of this area is just beyond Lohrman Lane. Assuming 2.8 persons per dwelling unit, these areas would house a total population of 21,900 in 1985.

Rural areas. About 7,400 people now live in rural dwellings beyond the present city limits. Of these, 2,700 will be absorbed by urban expansion by 1985. However, a population gain of about 2,300 is predicted for the remaining rural area, so that non-urban population is expected to remain about 7,000 through 1985. It is anticipated that dairy ranching will become the planning area's main agricultural pursuit. Most lands now used for grazing still will be available in 1985.

COMMERCIAL AREAS

Two kinds of commercial areas are proposed. The plan provides 290 acres for retail and office commercial uses including stores, personal service establishments, offices, and other businesses that thrive when grouped close together. The plan also provides 248 acres for service and thoroughfare commercial uses. This category includes automotive and farm equipment sales and service, lumber and building

material sales, repair shops, service stations, and hotels and motels. These types of businesses do not need to be concentrated and should not be mixed with retail stores. Service stations, restaurants, and motels should be clustered near freeway interchanges where they can attract passing motorists.

The report on planning factors and alternative policies projected a need for 387 acres of commercial land, including parking, in 1985. The plan shows a total of 538 acres. There now are extensive areas within which scattered service and thoroughfare commercial establishments exist, and it is logical that these areas should continue mainly in commercial use. Because concentration is not important to this type of trade, the fact that these areas probably will not fill up by 1985 will not be detrimental. In effect, they have expansion space built into them.

For purposes of discussion, the 290 acre retail and office commercial category is divided into three areas:

Downtown. The plan provides for the largest practicable downtown (125 acres) in line with projected commercial space needs. The future downtown will be bounded by the river and Sixth Street, extending from Washington Street to Mountain View Avenue. The expanded downtown will accommodate 71 acres of store and office floor area (including 54 acres of ground floor space) and 71 acres for parking (an amount equal to total floor area).

The east side beyond the freeway. In this area, the plan provides 95 acres for shopping centers. More land (79 acres) will be needed for parking and landscaping than for store and office space (16 acres). The trend toward fewer and larger shopping centers with plenty of parking limits the number of shopping centers that will be needed. The

plan proposes six: one "community" center of 35 acres, and five "neighborhood" centers, primarily for convenience goods, of 12 acres each. The locations shown on the plan are approximate only. If the owner of a designated site fails to develop a shopping center when market conditions justify it, then another property owner in the vicinity should be given a chance. The community shopping center should be near the center of its service area, but far enough from downtown to preserve the dominance of the central district.

Remainder of the planning area. Proposals in the remainder of the area mainly call for modernizing and expanding existing shopping districts: East Washington Street southwest of Payran, Petaluma Boulevard North between West Street and Hill Plaza, Douglas Street, and Straubville. A new 5 acre center is proposed at I Street and Sunny Slope Road. Altogether, 70 acres of retail and office commercial uses are proposed for this area.

The 248 acres of service and thoroughfare commercial uses are distributed among six areas:

Lakeville interchange	15 acres
Petaluma Boulevard South between Mountain View and McNear Avenues	7 acres
East Washington interchange	3 acres
Petaluma Boulevard North from Magnolia Avenue to Redwood Highway North	162 acres
Denman interchange and Redwood Highway North	31 acres
Bodega Avenue near Lohrman Lane	30 acres

INDUSTRIAL AREAS

In 1985, the planning area will need 1,440 acres of land for industrial plants that are expected to provide 4,000 manufacturing jobs. Concentration is not always advantageous to industry; indeed, plants with nuisance features should be isolated. It is prudent, therefore, to provide a generous amount of industrial land to allow for unforeseen needs and to avoid creating land monopolies. The plan provides 1,881 acres for industrial use. Designation of an area for industry on the plan will not disrupt present agricultural use but, with proper zoning restrictions, will restrain residential development. From the standpoint of traffic circulation, it is advantageous to apportion industry among several areas so that peak hour traffic will not become unduly congested in one direction.

Three industrial districts are designated on the plan:

The north industrial district encompasses 494 acres bounded by McDowell Road, Sonoma Mountain Road, the Petaluma River to Corona Road, Petaluma Boulevard and Stony Point Road, and the city limits. A few industrial and commercial firms are located in the area, and a few homes are scattered along Petaluma Boulevard and Corona Road. Portions of the district are subject to flooding, and drainage works will be necessary to solve this problem. The land is well served by the freeway, major streets, and both railroads. Because this area is windward of the city about 85 per cent of the time and adjoins residential neighborhoods, it is proposed for limited industrial use.

(Limited industrial districts should be restricted to plants that do not have harmful or annoying effects on nearby areas. Only those industries that can meet relatively high standards regarding odor, noise, vibration, heat, glare, electrical disturbance, and discharge of wastes, and involve no hazard of fire or explosion should be allowed to locate in limited industrial districts. Plants that cannot meet such standards should be restricted to general industrial districts.)

The central industrial district comprises 382 acres on the east side lying generally southwest of Wilson Street and southeast of Jefferson Street west of the freeway. At present, most of the planning area's industrial firms are located here. The district is well served by rail and water transportation, and access to the freeway is convenient. Because the area is near a residential neighborhood and shopping districts, new plants locating here should be required to meet limited industrial district standards. To accommodate some heavy industries near the center of the city, 35 acres on the east side of the river east of proposed Mountain View Avenue and 11 acres on the west side of the river fronting on Petaluma Boulevard have been designated for general industry. The creamery on Western Avenue (7 acres) and the quarry on Petaluma Boulevard South west of the freeway (49 acres) are expected to continue as industrial operations through the planning period.

The south industrial district (1,005 acres) is located east of the freeway and southeast of Casa Grande Avenue. The area now is mainly vacant except for two tallow works and some bulk oil storage tanks. Freeway access is good, and rail and water transportation are immediately available. Because the district is located at the edge of the urban area, has large parcels of land available, and is windward of the city only 15 per cent of the time, it is proposed for general industrial use.

SCHOOLS

The planning area encompasses all of four elementary school districts and parts of seven. The plan assumes unification of the many elementary school districts with the high school district, as proposed in the 1961 Booz-Allen-Hamilton report, or expansion of the Petaluma City Elementary School District with each annexation to the city.

The following table summarizes projected enrollments and elementary school needs for the planning area for 1985:

	Dwelling Units	Children Per Dwelling Unit, Grades K-6	Children Grades K-6
East side	12,500	0.55	6,875
West side	11,100	0.36	3,995
Rural	2,500	0.36	900
Total	26,100	0.45	11,770

Two existing K-6 grade schools on the east side have an ultimate capacity of 484 students each. A small Old Adobe District school, to be located adjacent to the well site, could be planned for an eventual enrollment of 500. The plan proposes to accommodate 5,400 additional students in 10 schools with an average enrollment of 540.

Four existing K-6 grade schools on the west side have a total ultimate capacity of 1,985 students. The plan proposes to accommodate 1,620 of the additional 2,010 children in three schools with an average enrollment of 540. Approximately 400 students would attend schools serving rural areas on the fringe of the city.

Elementary school sites shown on the plan are only approximate. On the east side, the plan proposes locations that make it possible for most children to walk to school without crossing a major street. East side residential densities are such that the maximum walking distance for most students would be less than one-half mile. On the west side, terrain and lower densities dictate different criteria for locating school sites. The plan proposes that new schools be on the flatter lands and be near thoroughfares for convenience in transporting the many children who will live beyond walking distance.

The Cinnabar School, now located in a rural area off Skillman Lane, will serve urban families primarily, as the city expands northward along Petaluma Boulevard. The plan does not show the five other rural schools that are now operating. They could continue to serve the non-urban population, although three schools with a capacity of 430 each would adequately serve the rural population and 400 urban school children, were it not for long travel distances.

The Petaluma City High School District embraces the planning area, Cotati, and Pennngrove. Assuming no drop-out, junior and senior high school enrollments in the district will be 6,300 students each in 1985, if Cotati and Pennngrove grow at the same rate as the planning area. Of these totals, 4,960 junior high school students and 4,960 senior high school students will live in the planning area.

The two existing junior high schools together have an ultimate capacity of 1,900 students. Three new junior high schools, one on the west side and two on the east side, are proposed to serve a total of 3,060 planning area students in 1985.

The existing senior high school has an ultimate capacity of

1,100 students. It should continue to accommodate west side students living within a mile. Three new high schools are proposed to be located on the east side to serve the remaining 3,860 students in the planning area. Some students living in rural and low density areas on the west side will have to attend east side high schools. Because each will serve more east side than west side students, the plan proposes locating the schools on the east side. If each new school were designed for an ultimate enrollment capacity of 1,300, together they could accommodate enough students that only one additional high school would be needed to serve the rest of the district, outside the planning area.

Like the elementary schools, locations of junior and senior high schools shown on the plan are only approximate.

PARKS AND RECREATION

The City now owns approximately 27 acres of land in seven parks. By 1985, 10 to 15 times that amount of acreage will be required in community and neighborhood recreation parks alone. In addition, a city of 77,000 will need several large parks, each unique in its design or function.

The plan proposes the addition of 853 acres of land to the park system by 1985. Of this total, 326 acres already is City owned, and 527 acres will have to be acquired.

These are the parks and recreation facilities the plan calls for:

The McNear Home site, 14 acres.

Two rural parks in the hills for picnicking, hiking, camping, and youth activities: one on 270 acres of the City-owned

Lafferty Ranch in the Sonoma Mountains to the east, and one on 179 acres of tree-studded hill land off D Street south of La Cresta on the west side.

A standard (160 acres) 18-hole golf course near Ely Road and the proposed extension of Sonoma Mountain Road. The relatively flat terrain in this vicinity is suitable for a course, and it will stimulate high-quality residential development on the east side.

A 39-acre small craft harbor on the east side of the Petaluma River beyond the freeway. State funds already have been requested for construction of this project which will include berths, launching ramps, boat sales and repair, a storage area, and other marine facilities. A motel, a restaurant, and a yacht club also are planned. The General Plan provides nine acres for future expansion beyond the area designated for the harbor in 1960.

Twenty-six acres of park adjoining the small craft harbor, proposed as part of the original harbor plan. The City already owns the east 18 acres.

Two community recreation parks on the east side: one on 38 acres of the City-owned well site on McDowell Road adjacent to a proposed high school and the new Old Adobe District elementary school, the other on a 20 acre site on Ely Road between East Washington Street and Casa Grande Avenue adjoining a proposed high school.

Fifteen new neighborhood parks of approximately 6.5 acres each, 10 on the east side and 5 on the west side. All of these parks adjoin existing and proposed elementary school sites. The new parks would raise the total number of neighborhood recreation parks to 22, 12 on the east side and 10 on the west side.

CIVIC CENTER

The city hall and police station now occupy part of the 10-acre civic center site. Because of the location of the Veterans' Memorial Auditorium on the Petaluma Boulevard site, space originally purchased in the civic center for an auditorium is available for other buildings. A new library is planned on the corner of Bassett and English Streets. A bond proposal, defeated by a narrow margin in 1962, will be presented to the voters again in June 1963. A County office building and a new school administration building also are likely possibilities for the civic center. The plan also designates a second area, between the Veterans' Memorial Auditorium and the State Livestock and Poultry Pathology Laboratory, for public buildings that do not require central locations.

TRAFFICWAYS

The plan combines new trafficways proposals with proposals of the 1959 County-wide Thoroughfares Plan. Using information about driving habits that has been found to hold fairly constant in cities of Petaluma's size, it was possible to predict 1985 traffic volumes on all major segments of the proposed street network. The number of lanes designated on the plan for each thoroughfare was determined by the peak hour traffic it will have to carry. In appropriate cases, acquisition of right of way for additional lanes that will be needed after 1985 is recommended.

These are the proposed new thoroughfares:

A two lane ring road connecting North Webster Street, Webster Street, and Sunny Slope Avenue from Bodega Avenue to Mountain View Avenue.

Sonoma Mountain Road from Petaluma Boulevard North to Ely Road, four lanes with a new interchange at the freeway, and from Ely Road to Adobe Road, two lanes with right of way reserved for four lanes. (The version of the plan adopted by Sonoma County does not include the Sonoma Mountain Road-U.S. 101 Freeway interchange.)

A new street, parallel to and southeast of East Washington Street, connecting with Lakeville Highway, four lanes from Lakeville Highway to Ely Road and two lanes from Ely Road to Adobe Road with right of way reserved for four lanes.

An extension of Payran Street, two lanes, meeting an extension across the river of Mountain View Avenue, four lanes.

Gossage Avenue-Paula Lane connection, two lanes.

Lehrman Lane from Skillman Lane to Magnolia Avenue and from Bodega Avenue to the intersection of Western Avenue and Chileno Valley Road, with an extension to D Street, two lanes.

Thompson Lane from Rainsville Road to Skillman Lane and from Bodega Avenue to Chapman Lane, with Chapman Lane extended to D Street, two lanes.

An extension of Mountain View Avenue from Country Club Drive via Furrington Road to D Street, two lanes.

A new two lane street connecting I Street with Kastania Road.

Petaluma-Napa Expressway, four lanes.

Ely Road from Casa Grande Avenue to Petaluma-Napa Expressway and Lakeville Highway, two lanes.

An extension of McDowell Road into the south industrial district, two lanes, except four lanes from Casa Grande Avenue to Lakeville Highway.

McDowell Road from Corona Road to Redwood Highway North, two lanes.

Magnolia Avenue realignment and connection to Payran Street, two lanes.

Corona Road-Skillman Lane connection (Bodega Expressway), four lanes, and a new diamond interchange at the freeway.

Liberty Road-Eucalyptus Avenue connection, two lanes.

Bodega Avenue-Washington Street connection, four lanes.

Keokuk Street-Sixth Street connection, two lanes.

The plan calls for widening the following existing two lane thoroughfares to four lanes:

Skillman Lane, to become the Bodega Expressway.

Corona Road from Petaluma Boulevard North to Ely Road.

Ely Road from Corona Road to the proposed new street.

McDowell Road from Corona Road to Casa Grande Avenue.

Wilson Street and Lakeville Highway from East Washington Street to the extension of Ely Road. The section between Mountain View Avenue and the proposed new street should be widened to six lanes.

Bodega Avenue, Washington Street, and East Washington Street from Middle Two Rock Road to Ely Road. Right of way for four lanes should be reserved on East Washington Street from Ely Road to Adobe Road.

D Street and East D Street from Sixth Street to Wilson Street.

Howard Street and Sixth Street from Washington Street to D Street.

RAPID TRANSIT

The plan designates the Northwestern Pacific Railroad right of way as the route of the extension of the Bay Area Rapid Transit system. Like the District's Marin County proposal, the rapid transit line would run alongside the railroad. The site of the present Northwestern Pacific depot is designated for the future transit station. The block bounded by East Washington, East D, Hopper, and Copeland Streets could be used for a parking lot accommodating 1,000 cars.

The proposed rapid transit station is centrally located and is served by two existing major cross-town thoroughfares (East Washington and East D Streets). This location can be expected to stimulate commercial development both along East Washington and in downtown Petaluma.

AIRPORT

The plan proposes relocation of the present Petaluma Sky Ranch to a new site. Two sites are possibilities. One is on the Lakeville Highway three and a half miles southeast of the Lakeville interchange; the other is in the vicinity of

Stony Point Road southwest of the Petaluma and Santa Rosa Railroad between Pepper Road and Rainsville Road. Neither location would interfere with the development of residential areas, and both are close enough to the central industrial district and downtown (about five miles) and the north and south industrial districts respectively (about one mile) to serve industry, business, and the general public conveniently. Because of the location of a 628-foot Consolan radio tower west of the runway location at the south site, a right-hand traffic pattern (instead of the conventional left-hand pattern) would be advisable during the 85 per cent of the time that winds blow from the northwest. Portions of the north site are subject to flooding, and Meacham Hill possibly may obstruct the flight pattern. The City should request the Federal Aviation Agency to study both sites and recommend one. When the F.A.A. report is received, the airport can be added to the plan.

A 3,400-foot landing strip is recommended. Although a paved runway of 2,100 feet is adequate for most single-engine and light twin-engine aircraft, sufficient land should be obtained for anticipated future needs because land values generally increase in the vicinity of a new airport. Air rights or land must be purchased in the clear zones to prevent building there. It is recommended that the clear zones be incorporated in the airport itself and that the larger approach zones be zoned to prevent construction of places of public assembly and obstructions to navigation.

When residential expansion makes it uneconomical and hazardous to retain the present Sky Ranch, private enterprise should be given an opportunity to develop a new airport in the location selected. However, if private capital cannot be interested in the project, the City should construct and operate the airport both as a public convenience and to stimulate Petaluma's industrial development.

EXPANSION AREAS AFTER 1985

The General Plan is designed for a point in time: 1985, or when the population of the planning area reaches 77,000. Before that time, the limits of growth shown on the plan probably will not be reached. After that time, new growth will push development beyond these limits.

The most appropriate area for industrial expansion after 1985 is southeast from the south industrial district. By that time, new methods of tide control, flood control, land fill, and construction probably will make it economically feasible to use the marshlands for industrial sites. Residential expansion will probably continue outward in all other directions, but at a more rapid pace in the remaining flat and rolling areas of the east side. Flood and sewer problems which will hold back development in the Rainsville Road-Thompson Lane area almost certainly will be solved by 1985. The slowest residential growth probably will be in the hill lands south of the city.

It is in the interest of the community at large that urban development be discouraged in these areas until such time as close-in areas designated on the plan are mostly built-up.

FROM PLAN TO REALITY

Now that the plan has been adopted, it is the official policy guide for the development of the City of Petaluma and the surrounding area. But membership on the Commissions, Council, and Board of Supervisors will change, and so will public policies and physical conditions. A plan that is not

re-examined periodically soon will become obsolete. Any major proposal in conflict with the plan calls for review of the reasons for the pertinent features of the plan. If the new proposal is found to be superior, the plan should be amended. The procedure prescribed by state law for amending the plan requires at least one public hearing before the planning commission and one before the legislative body. At least once every five years, and possibly more often if the community is growing rapidly, the plan should be restudied thoroughly.

Coordination of Governmental Activities

A major duty of a planning agency is to encourage and facilitate coordination of the activities of the departments of city and county government and among special districts. Misplaced public facilities more often result from lack of information than from inability to reach agreement. The General Plan provides the framework for the more detailed planning of the departments and districts that buy land and build streets, buildings, and parks. The plan must be understood by these agencies, and it must meet their needs.

Two important devices for ensuring systematic coordination are regular referral and review of the capital improvement program.

Regular referral. The State Planning Law requires that all development projects of the City and other public agencies be referred to the Planning Commission for a report on whether the proposal conforms with the General Plan. The Education Code requires school districts to refer proposed site purchases to the local planning commission. Other matters that should be referred include acquisition or sale of land, opening or closing of streets, building projects, and regulations affecting community development.

Capital improvement review. The General Plan indicates many of the public projects that will be needed in the Petaluma Area during the next 25 years. A capital improvement program is the instrument for ensuring that these and other projects are located and built in conformity with the plan. Such a program has been prepared jointly by the consultants and the City, although it has never been officially adopted. It lists needed public projects according to priority, separating those proposed for 1962-1965, 1966-1970, 1971-1975, 1976-1985, and those for which priorities and timing could not reasonably be assigned. Estimated costs are indicated. It is the duty of the Planning Commission to review all projects annually and to determine whether they are in conformity with the General Plan. The Commission also should suggest additional projects that it believes are needed. In order to avoid duplication or conflict, it is desirable that all public agencies, including school districts and other special districts, submit their capital improvement projects for review each year. Then the program should be recommended to the City Council for inclusion in the budget.

Zoning

A zoning ordinance based on the General Plan is the single most important means of translating the plan's proposals into action. The ordinance regulates use of the land, population densities, land coverage, and heights of structures, and requires off-street parking and off-street loading facilities. The ordinance consists of a map showing the various land use districts and a set of regulations, standards, and administrative procedures.

The General Plan is a long-range guide for future physical development, while the zoning ordinance is a relatively short-range regulatory measure. The zoning map will

never look the same as the General Plan because it must be more detailed and must reflect present conditions quite closely. All amendments to the zoning map should be in the direction of conformity with the General Plan as of the date of the change.

A new, modern City zoning ordinance and map, based on the adopted General Plan, has been adopted. County zoning regulations also should be reviewed and revised as necessary to carry out the plan's proposals for unincorporated areas.

Subdivision Regulations

Both the City and the County have subdivision ordinances that regulate the development of private lands by prescribing standards for street and lot design in new subdivisions. A subdivider is free to submit any design for the layout of a subdivision that conforms with the General Plan, the zoning ordinance, and the subdivision ordinance; but the Planning Commission may require that changes be made to gain a more workable plan or a better looking development.

Both the City and County subdivision ordinances should be reviewed and, if necessary, revised to conform with General Plan standards. One weakness of the County ordinance is that subdivision of land into four lots or less is not regulated. As a result, many lots with substandard access have been created in rural areas surrounding Petaluma. This practice should be halted by amending the ordinance to cover all divisions of land.

Precise Street Plans

Precise alignments for streets shown on the General Plan should be determined by engineering studies. Setback lines

should be established as provided in the State Planning Law to prevent buildings from being constructed in future street rights of way.

Urban Renewal

Several proposals of the General Plan may require federal financial assistance through the urban renewal program:

1. Development for industrial use of the low area bounded by the Petaluma River, Washington Street, Petaluma Boulevard North, and Bridge Street.
2. Redevelopment of the downtown core bounded by the Petaluma River, B Street, Kentucky Street, and Western Avenue.
3. Redevelopment for industrial use of east side areas southwest of Wilson Street.

Surveys revealed several other areas in which code violations and structural deficiencies indicate rehabilitation will be needed.

The community can modernize itself, much as a family modernizes its home, by rebuilding its deteriorating areas and reconditioning its obsolescent buildings through urban renewal. Before a federally assisted project can be considered, the city must have a program for community improvement. This program examines the total problem of slums and blight, evaluates what has been done to solve these problems, determines what still must be done, and works out a plan and schedule for doing it. Once the program for community improvement has been certified by the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency, the federal government will pay two-thirds of the cost of preparing a

community renewal program. This program identifies and measures the need for urban renewal, relates the need to the resources available to the community, and prescribes a long-range plan for action. It delineates the general boundaries of project areas, specifies the type of redevelopment or reconditioning necessary, and assigns priorities to projects. If a project requires clearance, federal grants will pay up to two-thirds of the difference between the cost of planning the project and acquiring and clearing land, and the amount received when the land is sold to a private developer for rebuilding in accord with the plan. Families displaced by urban renewal projects must be adequately rehoused. Special financial incentives encourage construction of relocation housing and, in areas where clearance is not warranted, reconditioning of deteriorating structures.

Annexation

At present most of the urban development in the Petaluma area is within the city limits. By establishing a firm policy of not extending sewer and water service to unincorporated territory, the City can discourage scattered fringe development. Keeping all urban growth within the city will assure efficient and adequate municipal services and fair distribution of the cost. By initiating, accepting, or rejecting annexation proposals, the City can exert a measure of control over the direction and timing of development.

Community Appearance

Improvement of Petaluma's appearance will require strong leadership on the part of the City Planning Commission and City Council. High standards should be established for public projects. Entrances to Petaluma and medians of major thoroughfares should be landscaped. Planting of street trees, handsome street design, and power poles lo-

cated on rear lot lines should be required under the subdivision ordinance.

The location, size, and illumination of signs are regulated under the new zoning ordinance. Billboards are permitted only in service and thoroughfare commercial districts and are prohibited altogether along the freeway. The zoning ordinance also prescribes that site plans and landscape plans for public buildings, churches, motels and hotels, office buildings, trailer parks, parking lots, public utilities structures and installations, and all commercial and industrial uses shall be submitted to the Planning Commission for review and approval prior to issuance of a building permit.

The Role of Citizen Groups

The Citizens Committee performed an invaluable service in recommending broad policies to guide the General Plan. It would be a great loss to Petaluma if this interest were not sustained in the years ahead. In most communities that have successful planning programs, citizen groups maintain constant vigilance to be sure that the adopted plan is carried out.

The 110-member committee represented all segments of the community. It should be rejuvenated and enlarged to include official representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, the Petaluma Coordinating Council, and other strong civic and business groups. The committee should be reorganized as a Planning Advisory Committee whose goal would be to promote the development of the community in accord with the General Plan. The strengthened committee would be in a position to assure the City and County Planning Commissions, the City Council, and the Board of Supervisors that the people of Petaluma support the General Plan whenever an issue involving the plan is to be decided.

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Mrs. Andrew Bertucci

Charles Gorman
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Mrs. Clarence Hansen
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